

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 remain pending in the application.

Claims 1-4, 7, 9-11, 14-17, 19, 20 and 22 over Chamberlin in view of Sacca;
Claims 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 18 and 21 in view of Chamberlin in view of Sacca & Li

In the Office Action, claim 1-4, 7, 9-11, 14-17, 19, 20 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over U.S. Pat. No. 4,817,127 to Chamberlin et al. ("Chamberlin") in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,692,042 to Sacca ("Sacca"); and dependent claims 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 18 and 21 were rejected in over Chamberlin in view of Sacca, and further in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,612,996 to Li ("Li"). The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

All claims 1-22 are amended herein to variously recite an important distinction between the present invention and that of the primary references Chamberlin and Sacca: That the present invention is a full-duplex system allowing a far end party to a telephone call to both hear playback of a recorded message AND SPEAK AT THE SAME TIME.

The Office Action correctly acknowledged that Chamberlin fails to disclose a message playback signal that is combined with a receive signal by a summer, allowing simultaneously hearing by a local user of a speakerphone (Office Action, page 3). The Office Action relies on Sacca to allegedly make up for the deficiencies in Chamberlin to arrive at the claimed invention. The Applicants respectfully disagree.

Sacca discloses a combined source signal comprising one or more alternate signal sources, e.g., tape playback, tones, synthesized speech, etc. for transmission over the telephone line.

The Examiner combines Chamberlin and Sacca to arrive at a theoretical speakerphone that would allow playback of a recorded message AND allow a conversation to occur between two parties, both listening to the message. However, such a theoretical speakerphone, even if properly combined by the Examiner, would still nevertheless be a half-duplex device. (See, e.g., Sacca, col. 13, lines 10-15)

In fact, not only is Sacca a half-duplex telephone, Sacca teaches AWAY from implementation of a full-duplex telephone. In particular, Sacca teaches that because “the speakerphone operation is bi-stable (only two stable states are possible, TX or RX), the system is essentially simple and can easily be adjusted to achieve desirable performance. Moreover, if one party talks, even pausing between words or sentences, the speakerphone remains in the same state until the other party interrupts.”

Can it be imagined how completely frustrating such a theoretical device would be in a half-duplex speakerphone. For instance, though it might appear that both parties to a speakerphone conversation would be able to listen to a recorded message, as soon as the far end person speaks, coughs, or otherwise makes a noise, the speakerphone at the other end would immediately switch to a receive (RX) mode. This would CUT-OFF transmission of the recorded message from the speakerphone, and thus at that point the far end party would not be able to hear the recorded message being played at the speakerphone.

An advantage of being able to playback a voice message while speaking at a far end phone is, e.g., to allow a person listening to a voice message to comment on the voice message while a conversation is taking place. The cited prior art fails to disclose, teach or suggest such an advantage.

Accordingly, for at least all the above reasons, claim 1-22 are patentable over the prior art of record. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the subject application is in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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